IT IS CLAIMED:

1. An oral-delivery composition for use in treating HCV in a HCV-infected patient comprising ovine IFN-τ, in a dosage effective to stimulate bloodstream levels of 2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase.

2. The oral-delivery composition of claim 1, which further comprises an oral-delivery vehicle containing IFN-τ, wherein said oral-delivery vehicle is effective to release the IFN-τ in active form in the digestive tract.

3. The composition of claim 2, wherein the vehicle is effective to release ovine IFN-τ in the stomach or intestines.

4. The composition of claim 1 wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ is between $10^8 - 10^{10}$ Units/day.

5. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ is greater than about 1×10^8 Units/day.

6. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ is greater than about 2×10^8 Units/day.

7. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ is greater than about 4×10^8 Units/day.

8. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ is greater than about 1×10^9 Units/day.

9. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ is greater than about 4×10^9 Units/day.

10. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ is greater than about 7×10^9 Units/day.

11. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN-τ avoids the *tunica mucosa oris*.

12. The composition of claim 1, in combination with ribavirin.

13. A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of HCV comprising:

ovine IFN-τ as an effective ingredient, wherein said composition avoids the absorption of ovine IFN-τ through the *tunica mucosa oris*.

14. A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of hepatitis caused by HCV comprising ovine IFN-τ as an effective ingredient.

15. A 2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase activity inducer in animals other than sheep comprising ovine IFN-τ.

16. A method of monitoring treatment of HCV by oral administration of ovine IFN-τ comprising:

measuring the blood levels of 2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase prior to and after such oral administration, and if necessary

adjusting the dose of IFN-τ until a measurable increase in blood 2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase level, relative to the level observed prior to administration, is observed.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein said adjusting includes increasing the dose above 10^8 units.